



## THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

The Official Newsletter of the Multi-National Force - Iraq

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December 3, 2007

# Iraq wants U.S. troop presence



U.S. Army Soldier with a Military Transition Team, 8th Iraqi Army Division and an Iraqi army soldier pull security during a patrol in Ad Diwanyah, Iraq, Nov. 19, 2007. U.S. Army photo by Spc. Alan Moos.

**WASHINGTON** — The government of Iraq appreciates the efforts and sacrifices of U.S. servicemembers engaged in the country's fight against insurgents, and it desires a continued American troop presence as Iraqi security forces improve in numbers and capability, an Iraqi government spokesman said Nov. 28.

The U.S.-Iraq Declaration of Principles for Friendship and Cooperation signed by President Bush and Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki during a Nov. 26 video-conference signifies American recognition of Iraq's sovereignty and also of the United States' continued commitment of support for Iraq, Ali al-Dabbagh said during a conference call with online "bloggers" and reporters.

The declaration "is a shared statement of intent that establishes common principles to frame our future relationship," Dabbagh explained, noting the document moves the two countries further along the path to normalized bilateral relations.

The leaders of Iraq and the United States have committed to begin negotiations

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## Shaping the future: Police Transition Team instills pride

**BAGHDAD** — In southern Baghdad's Doura region, change is in the air. To the naked eye, it may not seem so, but anyone who spends a little time around the 7th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division headquarters can see it.

They'll see Iraqis training Iraqis, non-commissioned officers (NCO) showing pride in their own NCO Corps, and a new generation of leaders in the Iraqi Security Forces developing in their country's time of need.

All in a day's work for the 7-2 National Police Transition Team (NPTT).

The 7-2 NPTT has started a Warrior

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**Press Conference:** Iraqi government, operations update

**Reconstruction Report:** The latest from USACE.

**Hot Item:** MNF-I Photo Gallery: Select Images from Iraq



Students from the Dur-Mandali Primary School for Girls in Balad-Ruz receive supplies from the family of fallen Paratrooper, Spc. Michael Rodriguez. His family said he wrote home about the wonderful kids he had met and loved. Photo by 1st Lt. Scott Marler.

## Family honors fallen Soldier

**BALAD-RUZ** — The note read, “The school supplies that we are giving you today are from the family of a Soldier who died in Iraq, who loved the children of Iraq. His name is Specialist Michael Rodriguez.”

The speaker is Capt. James Goethals, a Civil-Military Affairs officer stationed in Eastern Diyala Province. The audience is a crowd of almost (100) young girls at the Dur-Mandali Primary School for Girls in the city of Balad-Ruz.

Spc. Rodriguez was assigned to 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. He was killed in action in April, when multiple suicide bombers driving explosives-laden vehicles attacked his unit’s base in As-Sadah. He had written home telling his family about how much

affection he had for the children he saw on patrol, and so his family turned their grief to a positive end, collecting school supplies for Iraqi children.

Capt. Goethals took over the mission of delivering the school supplies when Spc. Rodriguez’s unit rotated home this past October. He was accompanied by Capt. Tony Keller from 1st Squadron, 32nd Cavalry Regiment, the Mayor of Ballad Ruz, Mohammed Rouf Hussein and the Superintendent of Schools, Morat Kadum.

Following the presentation of the school supplies, Capt. Keller, Mayor Hussein and Superintendent Kadum spoke to the school teachers, thanking them for their service to the community and emphasizing the importance of an education, both for these

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# Muthanna governor thanks engineers

**TALLIL** — The governor of Muthanna Province has extended his thanks to the engineers of the Gulf Region South (GRS) District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the district’s work in his province.

“We would like to send our thanks and appreciation for your great works, which help Al Muthanna Province in construction and services,” said Muthanna Gov. Ahmed Marzoq Salal in a recent thank you letter addressed to GRS American Engineers.

“Thanks for your continuous works,” said the governor, who voiced hope that more help and support will be forthcoming from GRS.

Muthanna is one of the nine southern province of Iraq served by GRS, which to date has completed more than \$2.5 billion of projects across the south of Iraq and has nearly another \$1 billion worth of projects left to be done.

John Overfield, GRS resident engineer for Muthanna, in turn thanked the governor and other Muthanna officials for the excellent cooperation the Directors General have extended to the Corps of Engineers. The DGs are those Iraqi officials with whom the Corps personnel work with closely on projects.

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